or problems. Only when you have handed the child over to his father will he return to Italy."

"That would . . certainly be very helpful," Luella said, "but I must explain, Signor, that I was going to the British Embassy to ask for help financially for my journey to England. Having paid for my father's funeral I have no more money in this country."

"Your expenses need not trouble you at all," the Signor said. "Everything will be provided for you, and naturally, I will pay you an appropriate fee for your undertaking such a difficult task in caring for a small child."

Luella's first instinct was to refuse. Then she thought she would be very silly if she did so, she would need money when she arrived in England. She was hoping there would be some money in her father's bank account, or perhaps the publisher of *The Temples of Greece* owed him some royalties. But that was something of which she could not be certain.

At the same time she wished she need not be dependent on Signor Vecchio. She could not explain to herself why. She just knew she did not wish to be beholden to him. Despite the fact that he was doing her a favour, she did not like him.

"Now that is settled," the Signor said briskly. "What I suggest, Signorina, is that I escort you back to your hotel. You can pack your luggage and I will arrange for you to be on the express train for Paris which leaves this evening."

Again Luella wished she could refuse his offer, and tell him that she was not interested. Then she thought she should be thankful not to have to humiliate herself

at the British Embassy. And it was specially attractive that he had promised her a courier to escort her back to England. With an effort she answered: "Thank you . . thank you . . very much."

"I will take you back to your hotel," the Signor said. He walked towards the door as he spoke, and there was nothing Luella could do but follow him. She could not explain her reluctance to accept what seemed to be a very generous proposition.

Just before they drove off, Luella looked back at the house and saw Father Sebastian standing at a window watching them. Once again she was conscious that he had a coarse and somewhat unpleasant face. She wondered what he had found that had excited him so much when he had burst into Signor Vecchio's office.

When they reached the hotel Signor Vecchio sent her upstairs to pack and she heard him asking for the proprietor. Luella knew he was settling her bill. Again for no good reason she could think of she found herself resenting the fact that the Signor had taken everything into his own hands.

"I should be grateful, very grateful, that this opportunity has occurred," she told herself, "and it must have come in answer to my prayers to Mama and Papa. At the same time I cannot help feeling there is something wrong . . although I do not know what it is."

It did not take her long to pack her own clothes and the few things belonging to her father that she wanted to keep. There were a number of books already in a case. She had only to include one or two more before she closed the lid and locked it.